

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. An expression vector, said vector comprising an expression cassette
2 comprising from 5' to 3' the following elements: a CMV promoter sequence, a CMV
3 enhancer sequence, a CMV intron A sequence from the CMV major immediate early gene, a
4 heterologous nucleic acid sequence, and a polyadenylation site, wherein the promoter is
5 operably linked to the heterologous nucleic acid sequence.
- 1 2. The expression vector of claim 1, wherein the CMV intron A sequence
2 has a deletion from about base 1513 to about base 1736.
- 1 3. The expression vector of claim 1, wherein the heterologous nucleic
2 acid encodes a cancer antigen.
- 1 4. The expression vector of claim 1, wherein the expression cassette
2 comprises nucleotides 54-3675 of the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3.
- 1 5. An expression vector of claim 1, wherein the expression cassette
2 comprises nucleotides 1-1653 of the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3.
- 1 6. The expression vector of claim 1, wherein the expression cassette
2 comprises the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3.
- 1 7. The expression vector of claim 3, wherein the cancer antigen is
2 encoded by the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:6.
- 1 8. A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim 1.
- 1 9. A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim 4.
- 1 10. A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim 5.

- 1 11. A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim 6.
- 1 12. The host cell of claim 8, wherein the host cell is selected from the
2 group consisting of *E. coli* and mammalian cells.
- 1 13. The host cell of claim 9, wherein the host cell is selected from the
2 group consisting of *E. coli* and mammalian cells.
- 1 14. The host cell of claim 11, wherein the host cell is selected from the
2 group consisting of *E. coli* and mammalian cells.
- 1 15. A composition comprising an expression vector as set forth in claim 1.
- 1 16. A method for expressing a heterologous nucleic acid sequence, the
2 method comprising culturing a host cell comprising an expression vector, said vector
3 comprising an expression cassette comprising from 5' to 3' the following elements: a CMV
4 promoter sequence, a CMV enhancer sequence, a CMV intron A sequence from the CMV
5 major immediate early gene, a heterologous nucleic acid sequence, and a polyadenylation
6 site, wherein the promoter is operably linked to the heterologous nucleic acid sequence.
- 1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the CMV intron A sequence has a
2 deletion from about base 1513 to about base 1736.
- 1 18. The method of claim 16, wherein the heterologous nucleic acid
2 encodes a cancer antigen.
- 1 19. The method of claim 16, wherein the expression cassette comprises
2 nucleotides 54-3675 of the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3.
- 1 20. The method of claim 16, wherein the expression cassette comprises
2 nucleotides 1-1653 of the sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3.

1 21. The method of claim 16, wherein the expression cassette comprises the
2 sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3.

1 22. The method of claim 16, wherein the host cell is selected from the
2 group consisting of *E. coli* and mammalian cells.

1 23. The method of claim 18, wherein the cancer antigen is encoded by the
2 nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:6.

1 24. A method for eliciting an immune response, the method comprising the
2 steps of administering an immunogenically effective amount of the immunogenic
3 composition of claim 12 to a subject, wherein the immune response is directed against a
4 polypeptide encoded by the heterologous nucleic acid sequence.

1 25. The method of claim 24, wherein the immunogenic composition is
2 administered multiple times.